

CORE Project workshop  
Referring expression choice in grounded  
contexts: Linguistic, cognitive, and  
computational aspects  
**Closing remarks**

Gemma Boleda & Louise McNally



ESLLI 2026  
August 3-7, 2026

## Reminder: Goals of the workshop

- ▶ to further document and gain insight into the range of variation in referring expression choice in grounded contexts;
- ▶ to highlight its relevance for semantic/pragmatic theory, for theories of language and cognition, and for the use of language in computation;
- ▶ to promote communication and synergies between researchers at the interfaces of linguistics, cognitive science, and computation who have studied different aspects of referring expression choice in grounded contexts.

## New and highlighted factors in RE choice

- ▶ Production ease thanks to priming by repetition + possibility of exploiting multiple sorts of signals? (Rygaev, et al.)

## New and highlighted factors in RE choice

- ▶ Production ease thanks to priming by repetition + possibility of exploiting multiple sorts of signals? (Rygaev, et al.)
- ▶ (Un)conscious effects of causal reasoning? (Cheuk, et al.)

## New and highlighted factors in RE choice

- ▶ Production ease thanks to priming by repetition + possibility of exploiting multiple sorts of signals? (Rygaev, et al.)
- ▶ (Un)conscious effects of causal reasoning? (Cheuk, et al.)
- ▶ Facilitation of referent management? (Davis & Kleunder, Rumboldt, Li & Chen?)

## New and highlighted factors in RE choice

- ▶ Production ease thanks to priming by repetition + possibility of exploiting multiple sorts of signals? (Rygaev, et al.)
- ▶ (Un)conscious effects of causal reasoning? (Cheuk, et al.)
- ▶ Facilitation of referent management? (Davis & Kleunder, Rumboldt, Li & Chen?)
- ▶ Who has access to what part of the discourse and discourse domain? (Jasinskaja & von Heusinger)

## New and highlighted factors in RE choice

- ▶ Production ease thanks to priming by repetition + possibility of exploiting multiple sorts of signals? (Rygaev, et al.)
- ▶ (Un)conscious effects of causal reasoning? (Cheuk, et al.)
- ▶ Facilitation of referent management? (Davis & Kleunder, Rumboldt, Li & Chen?)
- ▶ Who has access to what part of the discourse and discourse domain? (Jasinskaja & von Heusinger)
- ▶ Effects of linguistic codification of social/perspectival meaning (Lee, Zhang)

## Methodological lessons

- ▶ Rare and hard to detect phenomena can offer key insights  $\Rightarrow$  “Old-fashioned” methods are still necessary (Davis & Kluender)

# Methodological lessons

- ▶ Rare and hard to detect phenomena can offer key insights  $\Rightarrow$  “Old-fashioned” methods are still necessary (Davis & Kluender)
- ▶ We can learn a lot from LLMs, not only about reference itself, but perhaps also about production (Paperno)
- ▶ However, it’s important to keep in mind that they were not trained interactively...only on (in a sense) the *observation* of (human) interactions, and this matters! (Bernardi)

# Methodological lessons

- ▶ Rare and hard to detect phenomena can offer key insights  $\Rightarrow$  “Old-fashioned” methods are still necessary (Davis & Kluender)
- ▶ We can learn a lot from LLMs, not only about reference itself, but perhaps also about production (Paperno)
- ▶ However, it’s important to keep in mind that they were not trained interactively...only on (in a sense) the *observation* of (human) interactions, and this matters! (Bernardi)
- ▶ Choice of visually perceptible features for studies matters (color, color, color) (Cheuk et al., Rygaev et al.)

## Methodological lessons

- ▶ Rare and hard to detect phenomena can offer key insights  $\Rightarrow$  “Old-fashioned” methods are still necessary (Davis & Kluender)
- ▶ We can learn a lot from LLMs, not only about reference itself, but perhaps also about production (Paperno)
- ▶ However, it’s important to keep in mind that they were not trained interactively...only on (in a sense) the *observation* of (human) interactions, and this matters! (Bernardi)
- ▶ Choice of visually perceptible features for studies matters (color, color, color) (Cheuk et al., Rygaev et al.)
- ▶ The language profile of participants needs to be taken into account when designing/evaluating data  $\Rightarrow$  Potential effect on the interpretability of frequency as a factor (Chen et al.)

## Methodological lessons

- ▶ Rare and hard to detect phenomena can offer key insights  $\Rightarrow$  “Old-fashioned” methods are still necessary (Davis & Kluender)
- ▶ We can learn a lot from LLMs, not only about reference itself, but perhaps also about production (Paperno)
- ▶ However, it’s important to keep in mind that they were not trained interactively...only on (in a sense) the *observation* of (human) interactions, and this matters! (Bernardi)
- ▶ Choice of visually perceptible features for studies matters (color, color, color) (Cheuk et al., Rygaev et al.)
- ▶ The language profile of participants needs to be taken into account when designing/evaluating data  $\Rightarrow$  Potential effect on the interpretability of frequency as a factor (Chen et al.)
- ▶ Possible effect of interactive vs. noninteractive task design in results (Xin, Mayol)

# Thanks to everyone!

(Including our funders: Grant PID2020-112602GB-I00 funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, and this year's ESSLLI organizers)

